

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 03761 172252Z

14

ACTION EUR-12

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R 172158Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1096

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 3761

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CA VN

SUBJECT: MINEXTERNAL AFFAIRS MACEACHEN'S SOUTHEAST ASIAN TRIP

REF: A. OTTAWA 3282, B. OTTAWA 3194

1. SUMMARY: AUG. 23-SEPT. 5 ASIAN TRIP BY MIN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MACEACHEN DESIGNED, IN PART, TO SHOW FLAG AND EMPHASIZE GOC INTEREST IN UPGRADING RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES VISITED AND WITH ASEAN. A PRIMARY PURPOSE WAS TO MONITOR COUNTRIES' ATTITUDES ON AID TO VIETNAM. RESPONSES APPARENTLY SUCH AS TO LEAD TO LIKELY GOC PACKAGE OF 3 OR 4 MILLION DOLLARS BUT FOR SANITARY PURPOSES. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF MET SEPT. 14 WITH DEREK BURNEY, CHIEF, PACIFIC DIVISION, EXTAFF, FOR POSTMORTEM OF MINEXTAFF MACEACHEN VISITS TO AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA AUG. 23 - SEPT 5.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 03761 172252Z

3. BURNEY SAID THAT OVERALL PURPOSE WAS TO SHOW THE

FLAG IN THAT AREA. GOC INTERESTED, HE SAID, IN UPGRADING BILATERAL RELATIONS BOTH WITH THE FOUR COUNTRIES AND WITH ASEAN AND HE NOTED THAT THE VISIT WAS FIRST EVER BY A CANADIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND. ADDED PURPOSE WAS TO GIVE MACEACHEN A FEEL FOR A REGION ABOUT WHICH HE KNEW LITTLE. FYI: IN LAST REGARD, EFFORT AND MONEY MAY HAVE BEEN LARGELY WASTED SINCE MACEACHEN WAS SWITCHED TO COMMONS HOUSE LEADER IN SEPT. 14 CABINET SHUFFLE. END FYI.

4. AFTER BURNEY'S ELABORATION OF ABOVE, CITING MEETINGS WITH TOP OFFICIALS IN EACH COUNTRY AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SMALL AID PACKAGES HERE AND THERE, BURNEY TURNED TO WHAT CLEARLY WAS MOST IMMEDIATE AND TANGIBLE PURPOSE OF THE TOUR: TO SOUND OUT THE FOUR COUNTRIES' ATTITUDES ON POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FOR VIETNAM. COMMENT: AS IS NOTED IN REF B, THE GOC IS NERVOUS ABOUT THE VISIT OF A VIETNAMESE DELEGATION TO OTTAWA END OF SEPTEMBER. THE VIETNAMESE WILL PUSH FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EMBASSY HERE AND THE CANADIANS ARE CONCERNED THAT MORE THAN A HANDFUL OF EMBASSY OFFICIALS COULD GIVE RISE TO AGITATION AMONG THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY IN CANADA. PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE CANADIANS ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE VIETNAMESE WILL HAVE AN EXTENSIVE AID SHOPPING LIST FOR EXPIATION, THEY WILL CLAIM, OF GOC WRONG-DOING DURING VIETNAM WAR. BEFORE EVEN ATTEMPTING TO PREPARE A RESPONSE, GOC WANTED A READING OF ATTITUDES IN NEIGHBORING STATES. END COMMENT.

5. BURNEY SAID THAT MACEACHEN AND HIS PARTY HAD RECEIVED MIXED READINGS IN THE FOUR CAPITALS ON THE SUBJECT OF POSSIBLE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM. INDEED, HE SAID, THEY HAD RECEIVED DIVERSE VIEWS EVEN WITHIN THE SAME GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO BURNEY, MALAYSIAN OFFICIALS APPARENTLY HAD DONE THE MOST THINKING ON THE SUBJECT. ACCORDING TO BURNEY, IN MALAYSIAN VIEW, RELIEF AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE WOULD BE APPROPRIATE, AS WOULD AID FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION "IF TO HEAL THE WOUNDS OF WAR". THE MALAYSIANS WOULD ALSO FAVOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OTTAWA 03761 172252Z

FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES BUT THEY ARE AGAINST SUCH ASSISTANCE FOR INDUSTRY.

6. ALTHOUGH THE INDONESIAN POSITION WAS NOT AS "REFINED" AS THAT OF MALAYSIA, BURNEY SAID THAT IT WAS GENERALLY THE SAME. HE ADDED THAT INDONESIAN FM MALIK WAS PARTICULARLY EVASIVE AND THAT ONE MEMBER OF CANADIAN DELEGATION QUIPPED LATER THAT MALIK HAD A "CREASE IN HIS

PANTS" AFTER THE MEETING FROM SO MUCH FENCE-STRADDLING. INDONESIAN OFFICIALS WERE UNDERSTANDABLY CONCERNED, BURNEY SAID, ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF GOC AID TO VIETNAM REDUCING INDONESIAN SHARE OF THE CANADIAN AID PIE. HE NOTED THAT INDONESIA IS THE ONLY PROGRAM RECIPIENT OF CANADIAN AID IN THE AREA.

7. BOTH AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BELIEVE THAT A "LITTLE AID IS A GOOD THING" IN BURNEY'S WORDS BUT THEY NOT SPECIFIC AS TO PARTICULAR TYPE THEY FEEL WOULD BE SUITABLE.

8. IN VIEW OF RESPONSES, BURNEY INDICATED THAT CANADA LIKELY WILL BE WILLING TO EXTEND TO VIETNAMESE \$3 OR \$4 MILLION OF BILATERAL AID. THE GOC FEELS, ACCORDING TO BURNEY, THAT THE REACTIONS TO VN AID DURING THE MACEACHEN VISIT WERE NOT AS HOSTILE AS WERE RESPONSES TO SAME INQUIRY DURING MARCH VISIT TO THE AREA BY THEN INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE MINISTER JAMIESON. HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT MOST NEGATIVE RESPONSE DURING JAMIESON TRIP WAS FROM THE THAIS AND THAT MACEACHEN DID NOT VISIT THAT COUNTRY.

9. BURNEY NOTED THAT A SMALL CANADIAN AID PACKAGE WOULD PROBABLY INCLUDE PROJECTS TO IMPROVE WATER SUPPLY IN POPULATION CENTERS AND ROAD-BUILDING PROJECTS -- NORTH/SOUTH, HE QUICKLY ADDED. HE NOTED THAT, QUITE APART FROM PROBLEMS OF NEIGHBORS' REACTIONS TO CANADIAN AID, GOC WILL NOT HAVE A MISSION IN VN TO MONITOR THE PROJECTS. LIBERAL GOVERNMENT AUSTERITY MEASURES HAVE FROZEN NUMBER OF CANADIAN POSTS. ONLY WAY TO OPEN UP IN VN, ACCORDING TO BURNEY, WOULD BE TO CLOSE UP ANOTHER POST ELSEWHERE AND THAT MOST UNLIKELY.
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 OTTAWA 03761 172252Z

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